

October 2010

Bulova Byline

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Saving Land

“We lost our lake last night.” This is what Lee District Supervisor Jeff McKay’s neighbor announced when Jeff responded to a knock on his door at 6:30 a.m. on October 1st. The dam breached after a full day and night of heavy rain. Water from the pond drained out into the creek and nearby floodplain.

Fortunately, no one was injured and property damage was minimal. The pond was one of five basins in the Kingstowne community that were once part of the old Leehigh Cement Company gravel pit operation. They were not built by the County and are not part of our stormwater management system.

Jeff and I walked the site later that day with staff from our public works department. While a good part of the pond has been lost, I was struck by how beautiful this wooded open space is even after the breach. The county is evaluating what actions to pursue – both short term and longer term - and we will be sure to engage the community in discussions of these plans.

The incident is a perfect example of the importance of Fairfax County’s **Watershed Management** efforts. When our Board adopted this year’s Budget, it included an increase in the Stormwater Management fee, which funds projects to repair our streams and lakes and improve water quality. I encourage readers to visit our [County Website](#) where a wealth of information on this topic can be found, including opportunities for residents to become involved.

Saving History

Preserving the rich and abundant history of Fairfax County has always been a priority for me. While serving as Braddock District Supervisor, I facilitated the first-time purchase of an historic easement in Fairfax County when we were able to save the Oak Hill manor house in Annandale from development.

The easement ensures that the house, built in 1790 by Richard Fitzhugh, will not only remain standing and cared for, but will be accessible to county residents. See inside for information about the exciting plans for this year’s **Oak Hill Celebration Day** which highlights some little known history of the African American presence in the area.

Fairfax has a wealth of riches in historic sites. There are over sixty sites in the **Mount Vernon** District alone. Our most famous, of course, is the home of our first president, George Washington. But some lesser known sites also offer insight into the past landscape and life of our community.

An especially interesting site is **the Lorton Workhouse Arts Center**, formerly the

D.C. Workhouse and Reformatory. Fairfax County has worked with the Lorton Arts Foundation since 2002 when the County acquired the 55-acre site, which since has transformed from a vacant prison into a multifunction cultural arts center.

In **Colchester**, we have just begun an archaeological dig that will offer a one-of-a-kind glimpse into a past beyond even the extensive history of our County.

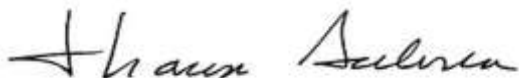
Fairfax County has used creative ways to protect and preserve our history. During tough economic times we've been able to leverage our resources through partnerships with community organizations. In addition to our Fairfax County Park Authority and the Regional Park Authority, we partner with organizations such as the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust and the Potomac Conservancy for historic as well as natural conservation.

Throughout the County, you can see examples of the work being done to preserve, maintain and restore the hundreds of historic sites that dot our landscape. From Mt. Vernon to Dranesville Tavern in Great Falls to the Sully Plantation near Dulles Airport, Fairfax County residents can find examples of the storied past of the place we call home. Visit our [County's Park Department's site](#), the [NVRPA site](#), and [Visit Fairfax](#) for more opportunities to learn about our history.

Saving Money

Lastly, I hope you will take the opportunity to weigh in as plans are considered for the Fiscal Year 2012 Budget. A new community engagement/outreach tool makes it easy for clubs, neighbors and small groups to learn about our budget challenges, measures that have already been taken to respond to our economic downturn, and to solicit your thoughts as we prepare for next year. I look forward to hearing from you and working with you during the months ahead!

Sincerely,



Sharon Bulova – Chairman, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors

Chairman Rolls out New and Improved Website



I am excited to report that we've launched our new and improved website. Please take a moment and click around on the site and see what you think.

In addition to an improved layout, my new site has a more "news" focus to it – you can see the latest information right at the top.

I've also made accessing older Bylines easier.

I hope you find the new Priority Projects section useful. We've compiled the latest information along with all the important background for some of Fairfax County's most important projects, including BRAC, the budget, Dulles Rail, Tysons Corner, HOT Lanes, and international partnerships. You can find my website at the link below:

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/chairman/



Oak Hill Day

When: Oct. 16, 12-5pm

Where: 4716 Wakefield Chapel Road, Annandale

Parking: Free Shuttle from 4414 Holborn Avenue at the Nancy Sprague Technology Center

Contact: Christina Fullmer at 703-324-2321, TTY 711

Please join us for **Oak Hill Day** on October 16, 2010. This free program is a celebration of local history, and this year will focus on the 19th century African-American communities in the area.

Speaking at the event will be **Maddy McCoy**, developer and curator of Fairfax County's Slavery Inventory database, who will share insights from her research about the lives of Ravensworth's slaves, former slaves and free blacks. **John Browne** will discuss map changes that divided up Oak Hill and Ravensworth land through generations of inheritance and sales.

Together, the speakers will present what is known of a now-lost African-American community that developed in the late 1800s in the vicinity of the Oak Hill area in Annandale.

Dennis Howard, a local historian, will give a personal history of the experience of his family's passage from slavery in Culpeper, Virginia, to becoming land owners and proprietors of a blacksmith shop on Little River Turnpike. I'm excited to learn about and take part in this program marking the rich history and contributions of African Americans in Fairfax County.

Oak Hill is a privately owned 18th century Georgian-style home that was preserved in 2004 when I led

the Board of Supervisors, the Park Authority Board and the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust to negotiate the purchase of an historic easement from Seville Homes. The easement ensures that the original landscaping and boxwoods remain intact and that the house remains true to its original character, allowing a unique opportunity to preserve an important piece of the history of our area for generations to come.

Working with the *A Look Back at Braddock Committee*, we began work on an annual celebration at Oak Hill, one of the oldest surviving homes in Fairfax County, to celebrate this local history.

I hope to see you at this exciting event! Along with the history of African-American contributions, there will be ongoing tours of the first floor of Oak Hill, food, music and children's activities.

Pictured: Above: Oak Hill. Below: Former Ravensworth Plantation.



Schedule

12:00-12:30 House open for unguided walk-through first floor only

12:30 Opening Ceremony

1:00—2:00 Guided House tours

2:00—3:30 House open for unguided walk-through

3:30—5:00 Guided tours of house

Speakers

1:00—1:30 Dennis Howard

1:45—2:45 Maddy McCoy & John Browne

3:00—3:30 Dennis Howard

3:45—4:45 Maddy McCoy & John Browne

Between 1:00 and 4:30 on the lawn—Food, Music and Children's Activities

No pets, please, as there will be farm animals.



Voters to Decide on Four Ballot Questions Next Month

On Nov. 2, Fairfax County voters will go to the polls. In addition to Congressional candidates, voters will vote on four ballot questions, three amendments to the Virginia Constitution and one sale of bonds for our County.

The County referendum will ask voters to decide whether or not Fairfax County will issue \$120 million in bonds to pay for Metro safety improvements. Fairfax County's contribution to Metro's Capital Improvements Project will be paid in full if voters approve the sale of the bonds.

Metro's highest priority for the CIP right now is improving safety, which includes fixing the track signal system, replacing the oldest railcars and buses, buying equipment to improve trackside worker protection, and adding new safety features to existing railcars and buses.

For the three state-wide ballot questions, voters will decide (1) whether to allow local governments, rather than the state, to set their own rules to determine **which homeowners over 65 or disabled receive real estate tax relief**; (2) whether the Virginia Constitution should be amended to grant **real estate tax relief to veterans** with 100 percent disability; and (3) whether the General Assembly should be allowed to increase the amount that must be set aside in the **rainy day fund, formally called the Revenue Stabilization Fund**.

For the first question, the amendment

would **lift a requirement** that tax exemptions be provided only to those under **"an extraordinary tax burden."** The amendment would also give the General Assembly authority to **permit localities to determine their own income or financial worth limitations** for tax exemptions for persons 65 years of age or older or for persons permanently and totally disabled.

For the second question, an amendment to the Constitution is proposed to **require the General Assembly to pass a law exempting from local taxation the principal residence owned and occupied by any veteran** with a 100 percent service-connected, permanent, and total disability. The veteran's surviving spouse could continue to claim the exemption so long as he or she does not remarry and continues to occupy the home as his or her principal residence.

For the third question, the Constitution would be amended to allow the General Assembly to **lift the savings cap on the rainy day fund from 10 percent to 15 percent** of the average annual tax revenues from income and retail sales tax for the previous 3 years. The effect of the amendment on this fall's ballot is to increase the amount that builds up in the Fund, not the amount that has to be set aside in any given year.

The rainy day fund was established in 1998, and was used to close state budget shortfalls in 2002, 2003, and 2009.

Ballot Questions:

1. **Lift the "extraordinary burden" requirement and allow local rules for senior, disabled exemptions from real estate taxes**
2. **Allow real estate tax exemptions for disabled veterans**
3. **Increase savings limit for Virginia's "rainy day" fund**
4. **Sell \$120 million in bonds for Metro improvements**

For more information and to see what your ballot will look like, visit

<http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/>

Public Input Needed For Draft Comprehensive Park Plan

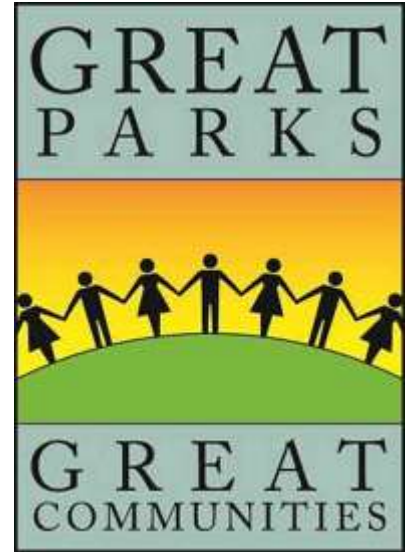
Regular Byline readers know that park space is a major issue for me.

Our Park Authority is looking for your input again in their draft long-term plan called Great Parks, Great Communities.

Using your input in the process and the themes you discussed, a draft park comprehensive plan was developed that will guide future park land acquisition, facility development and resource stewardship through 2020. Now we need your input again (see below for opportunities).

Some of the big themes that emerged out of the extensive public outreach phase of the planning process include connectivity, community building, service delivery, facility reinvestment, and land acquisition.

With over 22,500 acres in 416 parks, the Fairfax County park system is well used and highly regarded. Parks are an essential element of life to residents of Fairfax County.



Plan available at:

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/plandev/greatparks.htm

Submit comments on the Great Parks site or mail them to:

parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov

Monday, October 4 7 PM	Colvin Run Mill Barn, 10017 Colvin Run Rd., Great Falls,
Tuesday, October 5 7 PM	Herrity Building, 12055 Government Center Parkway, Room 106 and 107, Fairfax
Tuesday, October 12 7 PM	Audrey Moore RECenter, Rooms 1 and 2 8100 Braddock Road, Annandale
Thursday, October 14 7 PM	South County Government Center, Room 221C 8350 Richmond Highway, Alexandria

Do-it-Yourself Budget Toolkit Now Available Online

During the past two years, as our community has struggled with the effects of a severe national economic breakdown, we have benefitted from a generous level of community participation in the Budget Process.

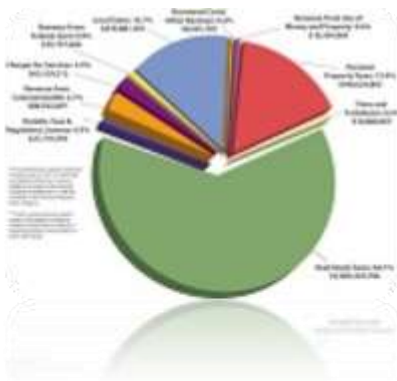
The process for identifying priorities, areas for savings, and efficiencies has been enriched and improved thanks to our residents and our workforce who have joined us at the table during these challenging times.

The County is expanding its outreach this year with the creation of a new take-home package for residents to hold their own budget discussions. This Do-it-Yourself Toolkit is now available online, and will be available to anyone who cannot attend the two

public forums in October or anyone who would prefer to lead a small-group discussion at home or with a club or organization to which you belong.

This toolkit is meant to get residents all the information they need, when they need it, so that they can offer us suggestions on how to improve Fairfax County through the budget process. The budget affects residents in a profound way, and therefore its development should involve not just policy experts and officials, but a well-informed community.

The Toolkit will include an educational [15-minute video produced by Channel 16](#), background information to guide the discussion, *continued on next page...*



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suggested questions for the group to use to frame their discussions, and an online form to provide feedback to the County.

We held a successful budget outreach meeting earlier this week, and will hold our second meeting on October 23rd at Hayfield Secondary School from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. These meetings provide a good opportunity for board members to hear directly from Fairfax County citizens, and a healthy dialogue will contribute to a budget that takes into account the needs of all residents.

Toolkit

A 15-minute video overview on the FY 2012 Budget
Background information to guide the discussion
Topic questions to be answered by the group
An online form to provide feedback to the county
Available on the county website at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dmb/fy2012/diy/

Public Outreach Meeting

Saturday, Oct. 23, 2-4 p.m., Hayfield Secondary School cafeteria
A facilitated discussion with Chairman Sharon Bulova and School Board Chairman Kathy Smith
Small-group workshops
Registration is required and can be completed online or by calling 703-324-2391, TTY 711.

Volunteer Opportunity: Become an Income Tax Assistant

Looking for a unique way to volunteer your time? Why not help someone to do their taxes? The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program has begun recruiting for the 2011 tax season, creating a great opportunity for you to make a real difference in the lives of Northern Virginia families.

For only 3 to 6 hours of your time each week during tax season (January to April), you will help prepare tax returns for residents, or you can be a greeter, offer IT

support, be a language interpreter, or help coordinate the on-site activities.

The program offers flexible hours at convenient locations around the area, and we offer free training for the Tax Wise and Tax Law software.

Get more information on volunteering and the VITA program by visiting the VITA website or contact James Do at 571-749-7838; TTY 711 or Thea Frisby 703-533-5702; TTY 711.



Want to Keep Fairfax County Beautiful? One simple tip...



Report graffiti immediately! Our Police Department says that removing graffiti quickly and consistently can discourage continued activity, and are encouraging you to report any graffiti to 703-691-2131, TTY 711.

In addition to reporting graffiti, property owners must remove or cover graffiti within 15 days.

No one wants graffiti to become a permanent part of their neighborhood, so we all must pitch in.

News in Brief

Fairfax County's Office of Public Affairs has unveiled a new comprehensive web news tool to serve residents.

You can access this new website, called the Fairfax County NewsWire, at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/news

Features:

- One master list of all news published by county agencies.
- More than 30 distinct topic and location news feeds
- Multiple ways to get info: E-mail, news feeds, social media, video, audio, mobile, text messages and more.
- New ways to interact with Fairfax County online such as **Ask Fairfax!**

The **Friends of the Virginia Room** will host their annual meeting on Sunday, October 24 from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the City of Fairfax Regional Library at 10360 North Street.

There, they will host a presentation and book signing with Barry Moreno, historian and author of **The Little World of Ellis Island**.

Please call 703-293-6227 for more information.

Another bug making its home in a big way around the County are **stink bugs**, so named because they give off an odor when they're squished. They do not pose any harm to people, but could harm crops.

Stink bugs are nuisances that will enter your house looking for shelter, but there are many products that will repel them. You can also use products like expanding foam to seal up any cracks around doors and windows that may allow them entry.

You've no doubt heard a lot about **bedbugs** recently. Here are a few tips from our health department about how to know if you have them, and how to get rid of them.

Detection:

- Multiple red, itchy bite marks on the body
- Tiny blood stains on the sheets
- Sweet, musty odor in the room
- You see them!

Eradication:

- Bedbugs **do not move long distances** without help
- Do not move new items into the infested room or take items from this room.
- When items must be removed, they should be **stored in trash bags and washed immediately or thrown away** outside away from the structure.
- Take everything off the walls and move furniture away from walls
- All laundry and linens need to be removed (in trash bags) and washed immediately
- Items should be washed with a **strong detergent in the hottest temperature setting possible** and stored away from the infested room
- If mattresses are **new** or in good condition, they can be vacuumed, placed into direct sunlight for a few hours on a warm day, and then zipped inside a plastic mattress cover.

